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## [Navy Medicine Looks Ahead to Ensure the Readiness of Female Sailors, Marines and Beneficiaries](#)

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Navy Medicine has taken a proactive stance and made women's health a priority for 2016.

*Editor's Note: Navy Medicine recently held its inaugural women's health summit in San Diego. Leaders from the medical community, fleet representatives and health researchers discussed critical topics regarding women's health and health care; and began to develop a comprehensive, strategic plan to shape and guide the future of the Navy and Marine Corps women's health community. An increasing number of women are wearing the cloth of our nation and our female beneficiary demographics are changing. In the Navy and Marine Corps, women are entering into ground combat roles, the submarine enlisted community and other operational specialties. Societal changes are illustrated by examples such as the growing number of young women playing competitive sports; the increasing average age at pregnancy and childbirth; the obesity epidemic and the expanding elderly population. In these rapidly changing times, being farsighted and proactive is necessary to plan the right health care services to optimize health and readiness for Sailors, Marines and others entrusted to our care. Based on patient feedback and input from the women's health summit participants, we determined the following questions must be explored and addressed:*

- How are we making comprehensive health information and health care services more readily available and accessible?
- How can we best ensure population health while maintaining our philosophy of patient-centered and individualized care?
- Are we doing enough for the prevention and early recognition of preventable conditions?
- Are musculoskeletal care, mental health care and reproductive health services tailored to our female population as needed?
- How will we meet and exceed the evolving needs and expectations of our female Sailors, Marines and beneficiaries in the near future?

Good health is a core component of readiness, and Navy Medicine is committed to ensuring our female Service members have the right tools, services and support to keep them safe and successful in their mission. While we know there is much work to be done, our community is committed to making changes that will enhance the delivery of care. We will begin by increasing the visibility and transparency of health information and health care services with easily accessible websites.. We will review policies and guidance to ensure that recommendations for preventive health services and readiness requirements are clear and succinct for health care providers and patients.

We are also exploring opportunities to introduce more accessible and convenient services specific to women's health needs. Navy Medicine has taken a proactive stance and made women's health a priority for 2016. These changes are only the beginning. We are confident they will enhance and streamline care for our female Sailors and Marines, and ultimately benefit our entire beneficiary population. Stay tuned for more updates and actions from our women's health community as we develop and transform the future of women's health in Navy Medicine!

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